

THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

SINCE 1877
MBER 1, 2005
VOL. 129
No. 34

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOC
701 COMMERCE ST STE 401
NASHVILLE TN 37203-3620



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

Historic storm slams into Mississippi

BILOXI, Miss. (BP and local reports) — Mississippi Baptist and Southern Baptist disaster relief units were prepared at press time on August 30 for a 300,000-meal response to Hurricane Katrina's devastating landfall along the Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama Gulf Coast areas.

Meteorologists described the storm as being of historic proportions, on the scale of Hurricane Camille in 1969 — one of the largest storms ever to hit the U.S. mainland.

The brunt of the Category 4 storm having passed in the night, the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force was deploying to the Gulf Coast area at press time on August 30.

Kay Cassibry, executive director of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union and disaster relief coordinator for Mississippi Baptists, said the Task Force's main mass feeding unit — a fully self-contained eighteen-wheeler from which volunteers can prepare up to 10,000 meals per day — was headed to First Church, Biloxi, to set up immediate operations.

Cassibry also said disaster relief units from other state Baptist conventions were headed to Mississippi:

- ♦ a Georgia unit will operate from a yet-to-be determined site in Pascagoula.

- ♦ a North Carolina unit will operate from First Church, Meridian.

- ♦ a Missouri unit will operate from First Church, McComb.

- ♦ a Kentucky unit will operate from Camp Garaywa in Clinton.

- ♦ a Florida unit will operate from Main Street Church, Hattiesburg.

The North American Mission Board, which coordinates the overall Southern Baptist disaster relief program, will operate from the Baptist Building in Jackson, Cassibry said.

Mississippi Baptist volunteers and Camp Garaywa personnel also began preparing meals on April 29 for evacuees in Jackson-area shelters.

Other Southern Baptist Disaster Relief-related units that have been activated include Louisiana, Tennessee, Texas Baptist Men, Oklahoma, Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, New Mexico, Iowa, Michigan, and Virginia Baptist Mission Board.

Twenty-five Southern Baptist feeding



HURRICANE'S POWER — A damaged restaurant sign along Interstate 55 in Jackson, more than 150 miles from Hurricane Katrina's landfall on August 29, attests to the devastating power of the storm — and a nearby motel sign that survived the furious onslaught didn't have encouraging news for evacuees. Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force volunteers and equipment, along with units from several other Baptist state conventions, were deploying to the Gulf Coast area at press time. (BR photo by Tony Martin)

Katrina hit the southeast Florida coast between Broward and Miami-Dade counties the day after the 13th anniversary of Hurricane Andrew, the most expensive natural disaster in United States history. Hurricane-force winds covered an area about 15 miles wide as Katrina moved ashore with gusts exceeding 90 mph, causing damage to trees and some structures and spawning widespread power outages, according to news reports.

After authorities reported the death toll at seven on Friday afternoon, they later revised the number to six storm-related deaths. Those who died included three people killed by falling trees, two boaters who tried to ride out the storm in their boats, and one elderly man who crashed his car into a tree. The seventh death reported earlier was not storm-related, according to news reports.

Early reports from the Mississippi Gulf Coast were grim. Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour put Mississippi's death toll at 84 at press time, but he said he expects the toll to be higher as emergency workers clear their way into devastated areas.

Katrina, the 11th named storm of the already unusually busy Atlantic hurricane season, dropped more than 11 inches of rain in Miami-Dade County and was expected to produce a total of 20 inches in some areas, AP said.

"Hurricane Katrina comes only one year after the devastating impacts of Hurricanes Frances, Jeanne and Ivan, which impacted South Florida," Florida Gov. Jeb Bush wrote. "... Hurricane Katrina will only

exacerbate our overall recovery efforts."

Calling Katrina's damage "demoralizing for our citizens," Gov. Bush predicted recovery will present a financial hardship to Florida residents.

Katrina was the sixth hurricane to strike Florida in just over a year but the first to hit South Florida directly. It was the first to target Broward County head-on since a Category 4 storm in 1947, according to AP.

The Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief program is supported by gifts to the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering and administratively by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program.

Tax-deductible gifts to the hurricane relief effort can be made to Hurricane Relief, c/o Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Checks should be made payable to MBCB, with "Hurricane Relief" noted on the memo line.

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SEP 06 2005



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VOLUME 129 • NUMBER 34
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4
and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street,
Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$9.35 per
year payable in advance. Economy plans
available for cooperating Mississippi churches.
Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS.
Member, Association of State Baptist Papers.
Deadlines: News items — one calendar
week prior to requested publication date.
Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to
requested publication date. All submissions
are subject to editing.

On Monday evening, I was 14 years
old all over again. I was sitting in the
dark in the den of my parent's home
in Belzoni surrounded by family, lis-
tening intently to the battery-powered radio as
Hurricane Camille slammed into Mississippi
— only this time, the hurricane's name was
different and it wasn't 1969, and I was sitting in
the den of my own home with my own fami-
ly. The only thing that was the same was the
monster storm's track.

I couldn't believe it was happening
again in my lifetime.

As hundreds of Mississippi
Baptist and Southern Baptist disas-
ter relief volunteers begin pouring
into Hurricane Katrina's wide area
of devastation with millions of dol-
lars in specialized equipment and
food supplies, we should be in
prayer just as we were 36 years ago.
Pray for the families who have lost
loved ones; the death toll from
Hurricane Katrina was already
large and growing at press time on
August 30. Pray for the people
stranded without food, water, or
any way to communicate with
loved ones for weeks to come; their
lives will never again be normal.

Pray for law enforcement officers
and emergency response personnel; no one
should have to see what they are going to see,
and no one should have to do what they are
going to have to do, as they push their way
into each devastated area.

Pray for the churches; initial reports indi-
cate that nearly every Mississippi Baptist
church south of Hattiesburg suffered some
degree of damage, from significant to
destroyed. The same can be reasonably
assumed to be true for Christian churches of
other denominations. Pray for the Mississippi
Baptist and Southern Baptist volunteers who
will be working around the clock to prepare
meals and help people recover; the intensity,
fatigue, and primitive conditions under which

they will be laboring can lead to
catastrophic accidents.

Pray for our nation, which
has been staggered in many
ways by this disaster; like
Mississippi and the South in
general, it's going to take an
unpredictably long time for all
of us to recover. Pray that in
every way the Lord will be glo-
rified even in this unimaginable
time of sorrow; it's going to be
exceedingly hard for people to
see Jesus in all the many
tragedies they will encounter in
the aftermath of this killer
storm, so it's up to us to be more
like Jesus than many of us ever
have been before.

Just pray. Start now, and keep
going. The Lord who takes our
every thought to heart will hear
us and comfort us in our hour of
need. As we lay down our trou-
bled heads and hearts yet again
tonight for rest, may that encour-
aging truth sustain us.

...

A phenomenon is likely
overtaking many who are still
without electricity and other
services in the wake of
Hurricane Katrina: we're actually having to
talk with each other just to have something to
do. The Perkins household has been devoid of
booming televisions, beeping video games,
ear-splitting jam boxes, and jangling tele-
phones for several days now, and I confess that
in the silence that now surrounds our unusu-
ally extensive conversations, I have heard
words and ideas and noticed gestures that I
have heretofore overlooked in the mad, noisy
rush of modern family life.

With nowhere to go and no fuel to get
anyway, it has been a revelation in many ways
to sit and talk with my wife of 20 years, our 13-
year-old daughter, and our 11-year-old son.

Pray

**"IT'S THE NEWEST TREND— WE'RE
REMOVING THE GIANT SCREENS. FROM
NOW ON, PEOPLE IN OUR CHURCH WILL
HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO LOOK AT EACH
OTHER!"**



We have entertained each other, we have
informed each other, and we have irritated
each other, but through it all we have had
time to draw closer to each other and marvel
at the power and majesty of nature as God
planned it.

As a family who is grateful to have been
largely untouched by Katrina's fury, we have
also grown more acquainted the past several
days, talking about our lives and hopes and
dreams and seeing God at work without all
the "conveniences" of modern life.

Perhaps our churches will benefit in the
same way during this time. We can hope —
and pray.

GUEST OPINION:



To our plateaued, declining churches

By Jerry Mixon, director
MBCB Cooperative Program Dept.

prayed with us, offering com-
fort. Later, over a country meal
of fried chicken, turnip greens,
green beans, and fried green
tomatoes, we celebrated our
faith and I was reminded that a
church should be measured by
more than "nickels and noses."

Dining beside a visitor from
the city, I realized that he had
no doubt heard the Gospel for
the first time in his life. To
expose this stranger to a culture
familiar to me but foreign to
him was a blessing.

As a Mississippi Baptist I am
grateful for all of our churches
including the so-called plateaued
churches that minister at Parbar.
In the Old Testament, Parbar was
the out of the way place of service
for the priest on the back side of
the temple (1 Chronicles 26:18).

In 2004 in Mississippi, we had
1,967 churches that actually gave
to the Cooperative Program. Of

that number, we had 803 church-
es that increased in Sunday
School while 274 churches had
no growth in Sunday School.

We also had 890 churches
show a decrease in average
Sunday School attendance.
However, these 1,164 plateaued
or declining churches gave
almost \$12,000,000 dollars to
Cooperative Program in 2004.

These facts may encourage
us to develop a different mea-
suring tool for over half of our
churches, who have grown in
areas other than numerically. If
you take these plateaued and
declining churches numerically
out of the mission formula for
Mississippi, you would reduce
our mission giving through the
Cooperative Program by 56%.

Leaving Parbar and walking
into the arena of downtown
county seat churches, let's
take a look at one of those

churches. Here is a church that
in 1990 had an average atten-
dance of 366 in Sunday School.
Fourteen years later they had
an average of 367 in Sunday
School. However, they have
been involved in local mis-
sions projects and mission
trips. They held revivals and
county-wide evangelistic cru-
sades, provided weekly hot
meals to needy senior adults,
developed a ministry of bring-
ing affordable clothing to the
community, and continued a
radio ministry. Almost one-
third of the budget is given to
the Cooperative Program.

The reality is that most areas
of Mississippi may not show
much potential for growth, but
a lot for ministry. So here is my
special appreciation to the
growing Mississippi Baptist
churches. This is also my spe-
cial salute to those so-called
plateaued or declining numeri-
cally churches who minister in
homes, ~~in homes, high-rise~~
~~apartments, villages, schools,~~
cities, and counties, from Olive
Branch to Ocean Springs, from
Macon to Mayerville, and to
those in Bluff Springs, Crosby,
Dumas, Pheba, Goss, Kokomo,
Mars Hill, Overt, Rocky Creek,
and Winona. You are a blessing.

I choose to ~~call~~ you not
plateaued or declining — I call
you faithful!

Rick Warren says he's still Southern Baptist

Editor's note: In response to recent stories by son, media that Rick Warren has distanced himself from the Southern Baptist Convention, Warren contacted Baptist Press, prompting the following report.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Author and pastor Rick Warren said in a series of communications with Baptist Press on Aug. 22-23 that he and his church remain committed to the Southern Baptist Convention, despite rumors to the contrary that began when he participated in a question and answer session with reporters in May.

The author of the best-selling book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, Warren called the rumors "nonsense" and "completely untrue."

"I'm Southern Baptist, our church is Southern Baptist, and we cooperate in SBC missions support at every level both in the United States and with our IMB [International Mission Board] missionaries around the world," Warren told Baptist Press.

In May Warren appeared at an event in Key West, Fla., sponsored by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. A transcript was posted online. According to the transcript, Warren was asked: "Your church is not a Baptist church?"

The transcript had him responding: "No — it was. In the early years, when we first got started, it was a part of the Southern Baptist Convention. One out of ten churches in America is an SBC church, and the reason the denomination's



Warren

so big is that every church is totally independent. The denomination has no control over it. So basically we cooperated with them in their missions program, but now we're doing our own missions program."

Warren, though, told BP he misunderstood the question, believing instead he was being asked if his church, Saddleback Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif., was "identi-

fied" as a Baptist church. Saddleback does not have the word "Baptist" in its name.

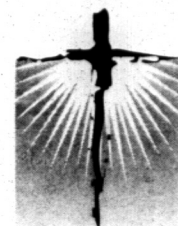
"I told her 'no' because we've never put Baptist in our name," Warren told BP. "Later, reading the transcript, I realized the question was, 'Is Saddleback not a Baptist church?' Any public person who is frequently interviewed will eventually say something he didn't mean, or intend, or even believe, out of confusion. But for 25 years our church has been involved in the SBC at the association, state, and national level."

Despite his answer at the Pew event, Warren said, Saddleback has indeed partnered with various Southern Baptist entities over the years, and continues to do so. Saddleback partnered with LifeWay Christian Resources in managing the "shipping logistics" for churches participating in the "40 Days of Purpose" focus, Warren said. The church partnered with the North American Mission Board in the "early development" of

the Nehemiah Project, he said, and has teamed up with the International Mission Board in various ways.

"[W]e've partnered with the IMB and field missionaries literally all around the world — doing purpose driven training, staffing mission meetings, hosting the [IMB] regional leaders and their wives for a week at Saddleback, and now as we are testing the prototype of our global P.E.A.C.E. plan, the IMB has been so supportive, so helpful with expertise, and so wonderfully helpful," he said.

The P.E.A.C.E. plan calls for churches worldwide to mobilize a billion Christians to eradicate five "giant problems" that plague people throughout the world — spiritual and physical poverty, "selfish leadership," disease and "ignorance."



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND
FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST
Record

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

SEPTEMBER 1, 2005

VOL. 129

No. 34

Smithsonian criticized

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Following an extensive investigation, the U.S. Office of Special Counsel has concluded that senior scientists at the Smithsonian Institution created a "hostile work environment" in order to force the resignation of one of its own who published a paper supportive of the Intelligent Design theory. Richard Sternberg, who holds two PhDs in evolutionary biology, filed a complaint with the Special Counsel last year saying he was subjected to discrimination on the basis of perceived religious beliefs and prompted to resign his post as editor of *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington* after he included a controversial peer-reviewed paper. The paper, by Stephen Meyer, a fellow at Seattle's Discovery Institute, was titled *The Origin of Biological Information and the Higher Taxonomic Categories* and laid out the evidential case for Intelligent Design by citing mainstream scientists from schools like the University of Chicago, Yale, Cambridge and Oxford. Scientists at the National Museum of Natural History, who are staunch evolutionists, retaliated against Sternberg by investigating his religion and smearing him as a "creationist," according to a report by *The Washington Post* Aug. 19. One example of the Smithsonian's hostility toward any theory that questions evolution is an excerpt from an e-mail sent by a senior scientist, according to *The Post*: "We are evolutionary biologists and I am sorry to see us made into the laughing stock of the world, even if this kind of rubbish sells well in backwoods USA." The Smithsonian investigated Sternberg's religious and political affiliations, looking for evidence that he was "a sleeper cell operative for the creationists," as Sternberg put it.

Sternberg is Catholic but does not consider himself devout and insists he does not believe in creationism, told *The Post* he included the Intelligent Design article because he wanted to "stir the scientific pot" since "science only moves forward on controversy." "I loathe careerism and the herd mentality," he said. "I really think that objective truth can be discovered and that popular opinion and consensus thinking does more to obscure than to reveal."

Looking back

10 years ago

The Southern Baptist Convention's recent apology for condoning racism in its history came too late, the president of the 4.5 million member National Baptist Convention of America told Associated Press.

20 years ago

Louie Farmer, retired Baptist Student Union director at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, is inducted into the Exchange Club's Book of Golden Deeds for his 26 years of Christian service to the university community.

50 years ago

A total of 30 decisions are recorded as a result of a most successful Baptist Training Union Assembly at Camp Garaywa, including commitments to vocational Christian service, dedications of life, and one profession of faith.



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board



YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer
with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my
sins and freedom from eter-
nal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and
rose from the grave to forgive
my sins and to restore my
relationship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus
Christ into my life. From this
time on, I want to live in a
loving relationship with Him.
(I receive Christ as my Savior
and Lord.)

"But as many as received him,
to them he gave the right to
become children of God, even to
those who believe in his name."
(John 1:12)

If you make a decision for
Jesus Christ today, contact a
local Baptist church for spiri-
tual guidance.

Near my home there is a small pond, a manmade retaining pool that has become the home of seven white ducks. In just the few moments it takes to pass by there and see the ducks gliding effortlessly across the water a kind of internal serenity is created that is not easily explained, but it is certainly enjoyed. The duck population has made that pond their home and habitat for several years. For a number of years there were only three ducks. People would stop and look at them, children would bring bread to feed them, and the ducks seem to enjoy a happy and good life interacting with those of us who lived around them. A couple of years ago four additional ducks appeared. You could tell that they were younger and at the time were somewhat smaller than the three ducks that had been there all along. Soon the whole pack of seven could be seen grazing around the edges of the pond or floating along together across the water. The larger group seemed to multiply the peacefulness of the whole scene.

The ducks and I were friends or maybe a better word would be acquaintances. Although we didn't go out socially or anything I always honked as I went by, or if I walked by the pond I would stop and speak to them. One day as I passed by I noticed that something had happened. I was not shocked, but I just noticed that the three older ducks were at one end of the pond and the four younger ducks were on the other end. No big deal I just figured that they were moving around nibbling and enjoying one another's company. A day or so later I saw the same thing. They were at different locations, but still the four and the three were across the pond from each other. Now I started to wonder what was actually taking place with the ducks. I just

decided to wait, observe, and listen. Day after day it was the same thing. If I saw them in the morning or in the evening they were always separated and in the same manner, the four and the three. After a couple of weeks passed and I had not seen all seven of them together at one time, I was growing intensely curious.

One day as I was out walking, I saw the separated ducks, and I walked over to the three older ducks, who I had now known for years. I asked them how they were doing. They said, "Oh, we are doing fine. It is a beautiful day isn't it?" I responded, "Yes, it is." I didn't want to appear to be too nosey so I just asked them, "How are your four friends over there on the other side of the pond doing?" They said, "Don't know!" I said, "Excuse me." The old duck said, "Don't know!" I responded, "I'm sorry — what do you mean you don't know?" The old duck said, "I mean I don't know how they are doing." I said, "Well, I thought you'll had such a wonderful relationship and special fellowship. Are you not connected with them any more?" He said, "Nope!" I said, "Well, what in the world happened?" The old duck said, "I don't know." His wife punched him in the side with her wing and said, "You do so!" I said, "That is alright. You do not have to explain it to me." The wife said, "Tell him what happened." He said, "Well, it is all their fault." I said, "Seriously, you do not have to tell me anything." She poked him in the side again with her wing and said, "Tell him!"

Slowly he began to explain some of the problems that the three duck community had with the four duck folks. At first he talked calmly and rationally and told me what had happened, but the further he went it was like a dam that had broken loose and in short order there was a flood of squawks, quacks, and I could hardly believe my ears. As I tried to keep a ledger of all of the issues that spewed out of his beak I almost got lost in the accounting. He would move from one thing to another and then back to something else. Overall there seemed to be about three major things that had caused the three and four duck split.

The first thing that seemed to be so big was concerning

their quacking. I said, "Could you explain what you are talking about?" I did not know that most of the time when ducks are quacking they are singing. It is their form of music. The older lead duck helped me to understand and explained that these younger ducks insisted on quacking the same quack over and over and over, maybe over 100 or 200 times. His wife quietly stood nearby nodding her head in agreement so I asked, "What is the problem?" He said, "Well, when we quack a song we do it three or four times or at the most five or six times and that is enough, but not them — nooooo!" Faintly I could hear the four ducks across the pond and sure enough they were quacking up a storm. The one duck of the three that had not said a word said, "Listen, you can hear them. Isn't that irritating? They just go on and on quack, quack, quack, quack, quack, and quack. It is just not right." So I said, "The reason that you are not together is because they quack a lot more than you do?" The formerly quiet duck said, "Oh, it is not just that. Can't you hear them? Can you not understand how fast they are quacking? They just like to quack, quack, and quack, quack. Most of the quack songs are written in 4/4 time, but they have taken them and juiced them up and they want to sing them faster and throw in some syncopated rhythm, and it is just not right." I said, "So that is the reason the three of you cannot be with the four of them?" The wife of the lead duck said, "Well, I wish that was all." I said, "There is more?" She said, "You betcha!"

Then she unloaded on me. "For as long as we have been at this pond we have always had our Sunday gatherings at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. and it was only a few weeks after those four came until they wanted to start meeting at 6 o'clock in the morning and start Sunday quacking." I said, "You gotta be kidding." She said, "No sir re bobtail. At 6 o'clock in the morning they cranked up." I said, "What did you do?" She said, "Well, thank goodness my husband had enough influence and clout to stop that. We worked out a compromise that we would start Sunday quacking at 9 o'clock rather than 6, but I still do not like it." I tried to be sympathetic and said, "Time changes are difficult to deal

with, aren't they?" The quiet duck spoke up, "Why should they have to be dealt with? They should do like we have always done and not change."

I started to comment on that but before I could they went to the third major subject that seemed to be an irritant. They said, "The straw that broke the camel's back was the way those four tried to bring in other ducks and just push us out of the way and make this their own pond." I said, "What are you referring to?" They said, "Well, you have been by here and seen those green-headed ducks, I think they are called Mallards. They think they ought to be welcome here on our pond." I said, "And they're not?" The response was, "This is our pond and not theirs! Even some of those big Canada geese came and you know how much they eat and how they waddle around all over the place." I said, "You mean to tell me that the four ducks think that those foreign ducks from Canada should be welcomed here?" They said, "Exactly! Can you believe it? In fact, there would probably be a dozen of those green-headed ones around here if we had not raised such a fuss and run them off."

I said, "So help me understand what has taken place here." The wife said, "Can't you see? The fellowship of the pond quacked up." I said, "So that is the reason why when I come by here from time to time they are always on one side of the pond and you'll are on the other side of the pond?" She said, "You got it!" I said, "Aren't you'll kin?" The only thing that any of them would say was, "Oomph!" I said, "Now help me understand what is taking place here. Aren't your families related?" She said, "Our mother and their mother were cousins but that does not matter." I said, "Well, that is a shame!" She said, "It is their fault and until they are willing to be like us we don't want to be with them."

I wanted to go over and talk to the other four ducks but I didn't have time right then, and I needed to get on about my business. So I just told the three that I would be praying for them and the other four that some how God would bring them back together. The quiet duck said, "Ain't never gonna happen!" I said, "Good-bye," and walked away thinking he is probably right. Down deep in my heart I was thanking God for the fact that Baptists don't act that way. It is sad to see the fellowship of a pond quack up, and it is even sadder when a church of the living Christ quacks up.

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with the Interest
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To low Interest Rates!
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JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Robbins recognized, Bunker Hill Church, Columbia



2. Student Life Camp Attendees, Calvary Church, Oxford

team members from Antioch Church, Leakesville: Richard and Allison Dykes, Tia Hodges, and Clarene and Jimmy Holcomb.

4. **Branch Church, Morton**, held their annual recognition service on Aug. 21. Shown, front row: Kay Purcell, Olivia Lampkin, Karleigh Mahaffey. Back row: Casey Torrence, Jessica Tagert, and Brittany Tagert.

5. **Christ Church, Greenwood**, celebrated its 20th anniversary June 12. The church burned the note on the Family Life Center and a time capsule was buried. Shown are Tommy Howard, Buddy Bridges, Glenn Hitt, pastor Lanny Haley, James Arnold, Richard Upchurch, and Scott Upchurch.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS



3. Brazil Mission Trip, George-Green Association



5. Noteburning, Christ Church, Greenwood

1. **Bunker Hill Church, Columbia**, honored Imogene Robbins for her involvement in VBS for over 56 years. Shown is pastor Randy Gardner presenting Robbins with a widow's mite pendant.

2. Students from **Calvary Church, Oxford**, recently attended a Student Life Camp at Covenant College, Lookout Mountain, Ga. Shown are the participants.

3. The **George-Green Association** sent a 12-member mission team to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 24-July 5. Shown are the team members at Living Water Mission in Villa Claudia: Richard and Allison Dykes, Laura Beth Kittrell, Vivian Kittrell, Tia Hodges, Leonard Herndon, Jimmy and Clarene Holcomb, Neal Fairley, Adrian Fairchild, Mike Cochran, Tony, Karen, and Katie Gray, and Tony Williams. Also shown are the



4. Recognition Service, Branch Church, Morton



MS POSITIONS

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, LAMBERT, MISS., is seeking a part-time minister of music. Please send resumes to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 145, Lambert, MS 38643 or contact church office at (662) 326-7772, 8:00 a.m.-12 noon, Monday-Friday. Call Don O'Quinn after 6:00 p.m. at (662) 326-7336.

MINISTER OF MUSIC: part-time leading to full-time. Psalms 28:7 style worship leader for growing church. Must be experienced, gifted in music, able to lead with praise band and praise team in dynamic praise and worship music and hymns with strong emphasis on worship. Please leave contact information at (601) 825-2112. Johns Baptist Church, Brandon, MS.

FIRST CHURCH, GLUCKSTADT, Miss., seeking a music minister for Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights only. Blended worship, free-flowing format. Contact Author Comans at (601) 209-6000 or email authorcomans@aol.com.

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Senatobia in northwest Mississippi. Please send your resume to Looxahoma Baptist Church, attention: Search Team, 808 Lyles Road, Senatobia, MS 38668.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF PEARL, Miss., is accepting applications for the position of part-time youth minister. The applicant should have good organizational skills, love young people and preferably have musical abilities. Send resume to First Baptist of Pearl, 405 N Bierdeman Road, Pearl, MS 39208 or email to www.fbcpearl.org.

RUTH BAPTIST CHURCH, Ruth, Miss., is seeking someone for the position of church pianist. Experience should include working with a choir and preparing musical programs and performances. Resumes should be sent to Ruth Baptist Church, 3499 Ruth Drive, S.E., Ruth, MS 39662 or email to janlarry@bellsouth.net.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN ROLLING FORK, Miss., is currently seeking a director of youth. Please send resumes with references to youth committee chairman, First Baptist Church, 73 North Second St., Rolling Fork, MS 39159.

www.mbcch.org

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CMB, UGKD, OKPB, SM
UGY WYHSMMSMH GCJU
OCSB UGY LKDMBCUSKM
KL UGY YCPUG; CMB
UGY GYCYMJ CPY UGY
AKPEJ KL UGSMY GCMBJ.

GYWPYAJ KMY: UYM

Clue: B = D

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Ephesians Five: Two.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. **Lakeshore Church, Jackson**, will hold a note burning celebration Sept. 18, 10:30 a.m., with music and a speaker from the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and dinner on the grounds following. For more information, call (601) 373-6677.
2. Southern gospel quartet **Arise and Sing** will perform September 10, 7 p.m., at **Silver Creek Church, McComb**. Free admission; light refreshments afterwards.
3. The missions ministry at **Pinelake Church, Brandon**, is sponsoring Perspectives, a 15-week course to enrich your knowledge of missions, beginning Aug. 30. College credit is available for attendees. Contact Barbara Binkley at (601) 594-2942 for more information.
4. **Midway Church, Meridian**, is planning a centennial celebration Sept. 17, 6-8 p.m. and Sept. 18, 10 a.m. For more information, call (601) 483-5497 or visit www.midwaybc.com.
5. **Gore Springs Church, Gore Springs**, is planning a 50th anniversary celebration October 2. All members and former members are invited to attend.
6. The churches of **Union County** honored Marvin Cox on his 25th anniversary as associational missions director. He was presented with a 790 John Deere farm tractor.
7. **Ken Boyette, First Church, Coffeeville**, has surrendered to full-time evangelism, and is available for supply preaching, revivals, retreats, and evangelistic meetings. Shown are Boyette and interim pastor Donnie Steward. Boyette can be reached at (662) 623-0276 or (662) 315-4461.
8. Nine participants and two counselors from **Raymond Road Church, Jackson**, attended Central Hills Bible Drill Camp July 7-9. Shown are Angie Miller, Brandon Eady, Destanie Miller, Somer Warren, Aaron Blakely, Sha Killen, Chris Prather, Courtney Evans, Eva Germany, Bailey Russell, and Rene' Warren.
9. GAs from **Tylertown Church, Tylertown**, attended Camp Garaywa this summer. Shown, back row, are Chance Harvey, Laura Lee Dyer, Elizabeth Murrell, Kelli McMichael, and Clancey Magee; front row, Kathy Magee, Haley Thomas, Lene Bonnette, Mary Elizabeth Stringer, and Carla Stringer.



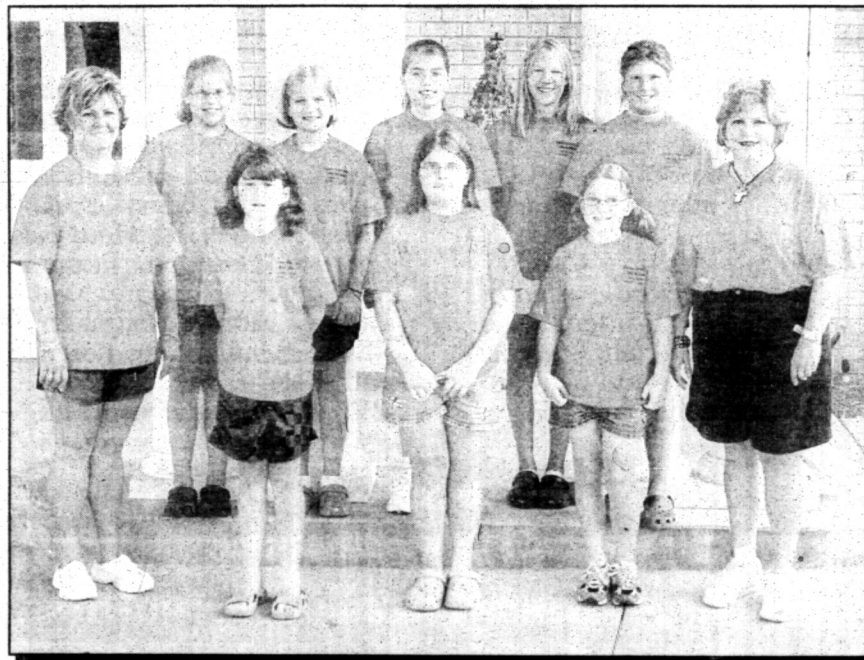
6. Associational missions director Cox honored by Union County



7. Stewart and Boyette, First Church, Coffeeville



8. Bible drillers, Raymond Road Church, Jackson



9. GAs, Tylertown Church, Tylertown

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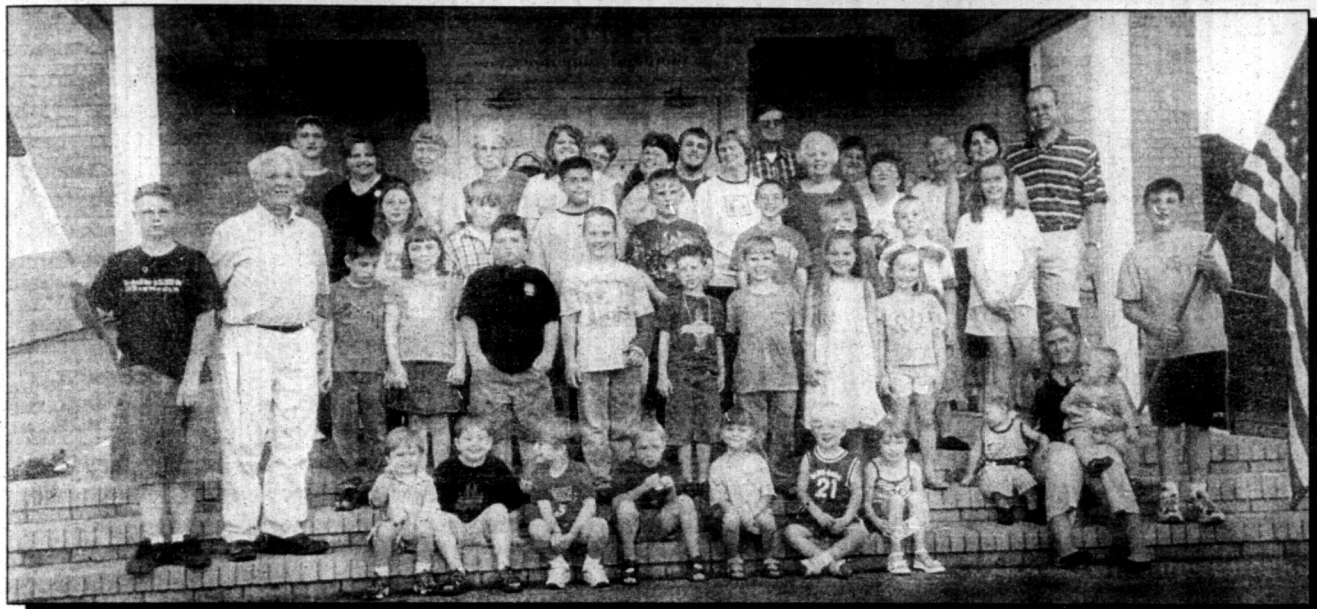
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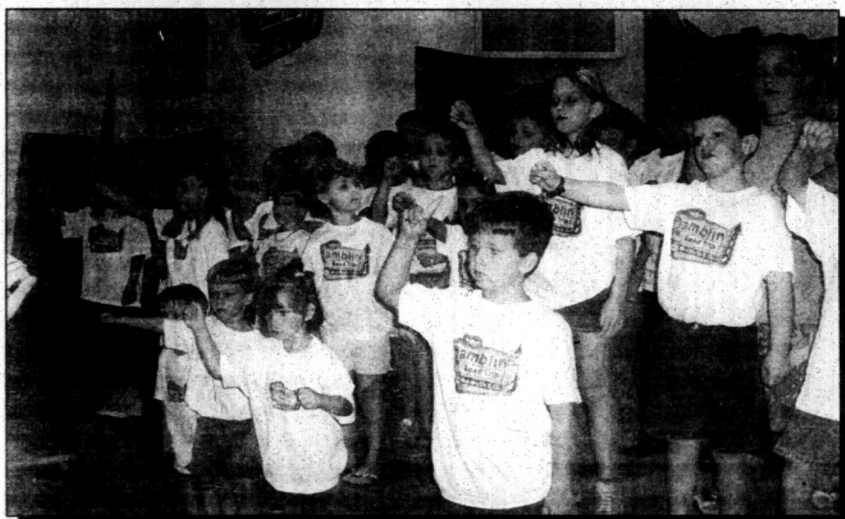
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



1. Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Association

1. **Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Association**, held two Vacation Bible Schools, for children and youth. Shown is the VBS Children's group. Robert E. Walker, pastor and director.

2. **New Hope Church, Simpson County**, recently held its VBS with an average attendance of 60. Shown are some of the participants.



2. New Hope Church, Simpson County

3. **LeMoyne Church, Biloxi**, held its VBS June 13-17. Shown are VBS director, Denise King and pastor Bell Renick. The participating boys and girls had a contest collecting pennies, and King and Renick had to sit in ice water and eat ice cream because of a tie. The children raised \$1000.40 for Alaska Mission Project.



3. LeMoyne Church, Biloxi

4. **Williamsville Church, Kosciusko**, wishes to thank all who participated in VBS and congratulate those who made decisions for Christ. Shown are some of the participants.



4. Williamsville Church, Kosciusko

STAFF CHANGES



Phillipson and Family



Mowdy and wife Gina

Branch Church, Morton, has called Timothy "Bobo" Phillipson as youth minister. Shown are Phillipson, his wife Stacy and son Brady Paul.

North Winona Church, Winona, has called Bradley Geno as associate pastor/minister of youth. He comes from First Church, Nettleton and is a graduate of Blue Mountain College.

Hebron Church, Soso, has called Richard Thomas as minister of music. Thomas, a native of Moselle Church, and is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi.

Park Haven Church, Laurel, has called Timothy Mowdy as pastor. Mowdy, from Newton, is shown with his wife Gina.

Providence Church, Jayess, has called Ron Satterwhite as pastor. Satterwhite, shown, has pastored churches in Florida, South Carolina, and Louisiana, and is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary.



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REVIVALS & HOMECOMINGS

Union Hall Church, Brookhaven: Revival, Oct. 2-6. Sun., 11 a.m. followed by dinner on the grounds, and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m. Tom McCormick, speaker. Reggie Bridges, music. Billy Joe Deer, pastor.

Maybank Church, Hattiesburg: Revival, Sept. 4-9; Sun., Sunday School, 9 a.m., worship, 10 a.m., covered dish lunch, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m. Don Taylor, evangelist; Mark King, music; Bob Robinson, pastor.

New Prospect Church, Lincoln County: Homecoming, Sept. 11; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Gene Douglas, speaker; Chad Douglas, music.

Society Hill Church, Oakvale, hosted a revival meeting Aug. 7-12, with seven professions of faith, three additions by letter, and several rededications.

Steep Hollow Church, Poplarville: Revival, Sept. 4-7; Sun., Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship at 8:30 a.m., 11 a.m., and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; James Messer, speaker. For more information, call (601) 795-4638.

Zion Hill Church, Wesson: Revival, Sept. 11-14; Sun., 10:45 a.m. and 6:45 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Step Martin, evangelist; Price Harris, music; Tom McCormick, pastor.



COLLEGE NEWS



3. WCC receives donation from Biloxi Regional Medical Center

1. Twenty-six current and former **William Carey College (WCC)** psychology and music therapy students participated in **Kamp Kaleidoscope**, a residential camp for children diagnosed with autism spec-

trum, held recently. "The week-long camp gave the volunteers an opportunity to help the children and by example learn more about God's word and His love," said Paul Cotten, professor of psychology and music therapy at WCC.

In an effort to enhance nursing along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the hospital has continued its partnership in education with WCC, the University of Southern Mississippi, and Mississippi Gulf Coast College. The money is to be used in the college's nursing program.

2. Twenty-five WCC students were inducted into the third annual Joseph and Nancy Fail School of Nursing Honor Society recently. Inductees are invited into the society by invitation only and must exhibit high standards of scholarship, leadership, and service.

3. WCC receives a \$70,000 donation from Biloxi Regional Medical Center.

4. U.S. News and World Report gives **Mississippi College (MC)** a #2 ranking as the Best Value in the South. For Best Universities Masters in the South, the magazine ranked MC as #25 out of 65. As last year, MC is ranked in the top tier of southern colleges.

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ORDINATIONS



1. Strickland and wife, First Church, Richton

1. Gray Fielding Strickland was ordained to the ministry July 17 by **First Church, Richton**. Shown are Strickland and his wife Lauren.

2. **Meadow Grove Church, Brandon**, recently licensed Marcus Canoy (left) and Jamie Walley to the ministry. Canoy serves as minister of education and Walley serves as minister of youth.

3. **Moak's Creek Church, Lincoln Association**, recently ordained Chris Elkins and Daniel Hux as deacons. Shown are Christy Elkins, Elkins, Hux, and Stephanie Hux.

4. **Lakeshore Church, Jackson**, ordained Terry Wood and

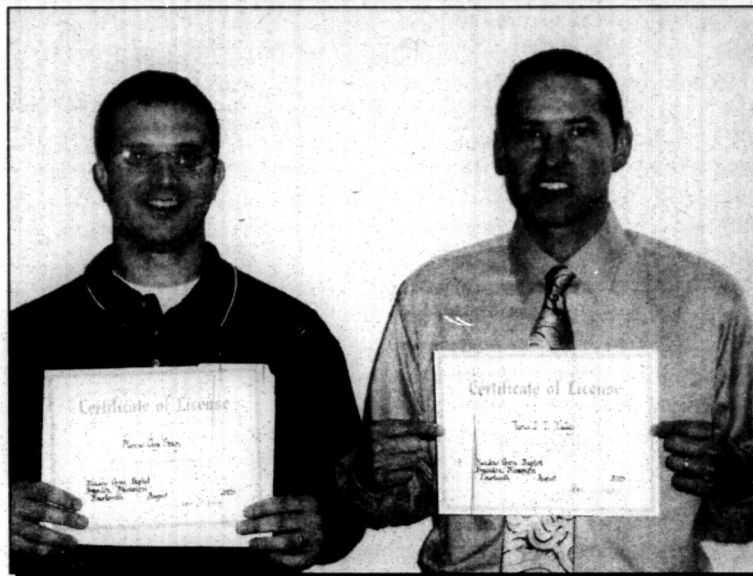
Matthew Leach as deacons. Shown are pastor Joe Crout presenting Wood with his ordination certificate as his wife Marsha looks on; and Crout congratulating Leach as Leach's girlfriend Jennifer Johnson looks on.

5. **Ridgeway Church, Vicksburg**, recently ordained J. C. Reeves, Jr. as deacon. Shown is Tony Beazley, interim pastor; Irene Reeves, J. C. Reeves, and Jimmy Chester.

6. **Strong Hope Church, Copiah Association**, recently ordained Harvey Laird and Billy Joe McLeod as deacons and ordaining David Hale to the preaching ministry. Shown are Laird, pastor David Crowe, and McLeod; and Crowe and Hale.



6. Crowe and Hale, Strong Hope Church, Copiah Assn.



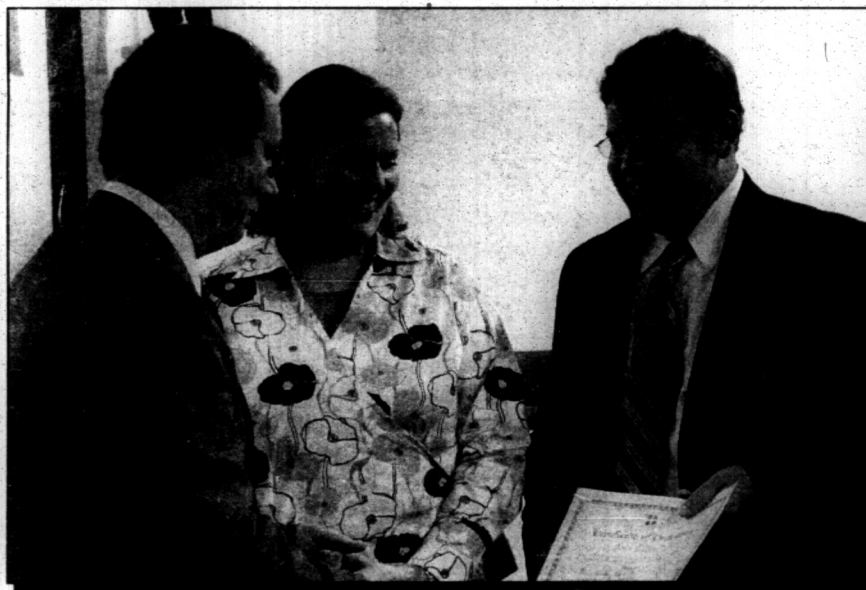
2. Canoy and Walley, Meadow Grove Church, Brandon



3. Elkins and Hux, Moak's Creek Church, Lincoln Association



4. Wood Ordination, Lakeshore Church, Jackson



4. Leach Ordination, Lakeshore Church, Jackson



5. Reeves Jr. Ordination, Ridgeway Church, Vicksburg



6. Laird, Crowe, and McLeod, Strong Hope Church, Copiah Assn.

Preaching conf. scheduled for FBC, Louisville

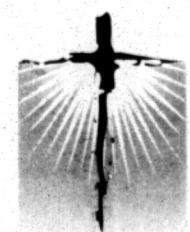
Winston Association in Louisville, in cooperation with Preaching magazine, is sponsoring a one-day preaching conference October 11 at First Church, Louisville. The conference theme is, Preaching Truth in a Whatever World.

The primary conference leader will be Michael Duduit, editor of Preaching magazine. A former pastor, Duduit has taught preaching at Southern Seminary and Union University and is author of several books on preaching, including the Handbook of Contemporary Preaching (Broadman & Holman).

Don Boone, pastor of the host church, will also serve as a guest speaker for the day-long conference.

The conference is open to participants from throughout the state. Registration cost is \$95 for the first participant from a church, and \$50 for each additional person from the same church. Cost includes lunch and a conference notebook packed with preaching ideas and resources.

Additional information, including schedules and on-line registration, is available at www.preaching.com/truth, or for more information call (800) 288-9673.



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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

August 15-26

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The Baptist Children's Village is currently expanding the Deanash Campus in Wiggins by adding a new cottage. We are building this cottage with all volunteer labor and would appreciate anyone who could volunteer. For more information contact Chrystelle Thames at 601-922-2242 or cthames@baptistchildrensvillage.com.

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Eloise Spring
Independence School
Reunion Committee
Kitty Stansifer
WOM Group/Weeks-
Whitten, Ackerman BC
Mr. & Mrs. T. L. Bowie
William J. Thigpen, Jr.

Mr. & Mrs. David Wansley
Glenda Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. J. M. Smiley
Mrs. Ellie Todd
Mrs. Nancy Shelton
Katie Madison Wade
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Downing
Mr. Casper D. Walker
Mr. & Mrs. Roy D. Hendricks
Mrs. Frances Walker
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene L. Culpepper
Mr. & Mrs. Ronnie Fortinberry
Mr. & Mrs. Charles W. Renfrow
Mr. & Mrs. W. C. Stevenson Jr.
Mrs. Alleyne Walters
Mr. & Mrs. Larry P. Franklin
Lillian, Perry Anne &
Ragan Hayward
Clyde White
Youth SSC, FBC-Collins
Luke Whittle
Mrs. Ruby Jean Kennedy
John Williams, III
Mr. & Mrs. Edward H. Odum
Gerald Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Riley Trimm &
Family
Isaac Eugene Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Riley Trimm &
Family
Jack G. Williams
Mr. John W. Davies
Mr. Paul Williamson
Tinsley Baptist Church
Mrs. Stella Wiltshire
Mrs. Dorothy Grantham
Sarah Winter
Hope Baptist Church
Billy Winters
Mr. & Mrs. James C. Brents Jr.
Tommy Wise, Sr.
Mrs. Pat Duckworth
Lucille H. Wolfe
Lester & Bette Herrington
Mr. F. L. Young
Mrs. John M. Tidwell Sr.

MEMORIAL CORRECTION:

08/01/05 Lyle Dunwoody
Billy & Sara Smith

Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Project

The Baptist Children's Village for the 3rd year will be partnering with Samaritan's Purse, an international relief organization headed by Rev. Franklin Graham. This project provides shoeboxes filled with gifts and candy for children in need around the world. These gifts are given and the gospel is shared with children who have never received a Christmas gift or heard the truth about Jesus Christ. This project is also a mission project for The Baptist Children's Village residents. Many the residents volunteer in the relay center and are learning how important it is to serve others. The collection dates are November 14-21. For more information contact Chrystelle Thames at The Baptist Children's Village at 601.922.2242 or cthames@baptistchildrensvillage.com or go to www.samaritanspurse.org.



The Baptist Children's Village

is seeking Christian individuals/couples
who feel God's call to work with teenagers

to join our ministry in the position of

Child Care Worker
on the India Nunnery Campus
in Jackson.

For more information or to request an
application please contact:

Mr. Terry Busby, Campus Life Director

601-922-2242

tbusby@baptistchildrensvillage.com

BCV Needs:

Thank you to those of you who have helped provide the following special items recently: coffee pots, fry daddy's, aprons and school supplies. Our children and staff are very appreciative of your generosity.

**We have 5 High School
Seniors that need:**

Senior Portraits, \$379
Graduation Invitations, \$100
Class Rings, \$200
Yearbooks, \$50

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Dead End Ahead

Ecclesiastes 1:13, 16-18, 2:1-8, 2:18-22

We all have a God-given purpose for being on earth whether we ever recognize and discover it or not. Thankfully there has been a renewed effort among Christians to discover their God-given purpose. King Solomon undertook the task of discovering life's purpose, and in the book of Ecclesiastes, gives valuable insight on finding fulfillment and purpose in life. Solomon found that most of the things he pursued, though beneficial in many ways, ended as dead ends when it came to finding fulfillment in life. This week, let us examine four of these dead ends that Solomon discovered.

Wisdom 1:13, 16-18

We see Solomon's Desire for Wisdom in verse 13. He set his heart on acquiring wisdom and

insight. Wisdom was his focus and he was determined to find it. We also see his Discovery of Wisdom in verses 16 and 17. 1 Kings 4 teaches that God gave Solomon wisdom and great understanding that was beyond the wisdom of all the men of the East. When the Queen of Sheba came to test his wisdom, Solomon answered all her questions with ease. He discovered the wisdom he so greatly desired. Finally, we see the Disclosure of Wisdom in verses 17 and 18. What did this wisdom disclose to Solomon? Though a great blessing and asset, wisdom was a dead end when it came to fulfillment in life. He depended on the research of his mind rather than the revelation of his God and found only a dead end.



Ivy

Worldly Pleasure 2:1-3

Solomon next determined to find fulfillment in the pleasure the world has to offer. Though he did not let himself get completely out of control in this pursuit, for he sought pleasure while guiding his heart with wisdom, it is clear from his own testimony that rather than seeking to glorify God, he was seeking to gratify his flesh. It, like his pursuit of wisdom, ended in a dead end.

Wealth 2:4-8

In this passage we find a summary of the abundance of wealth Solomon accrued. According to 1 Kings 10:14, over 25 tons of gold came to him yearly. His home also displayed his great wealth and according to 1 Kings 7, took him almost twice as long to build as the temple. Solomon found great wealth.

Multitudes of people strive for wealth by working their fingers to the bone seven days a week, and many at multiple

jobs. Others travel to the casinos with the hopes of hitting it big. Frivolous lawsuits are filed each day in the United States by those who long to get rich quick. People strive with all of their might to acquire wealth thinking that money can bring satisfaction, yet according to Solomon's discovery, it is one of many dead ends.

Work 2:18-22

Solomon found that wisdom, worldly pleasure, and wealth were dead ends when it comes to life's purpose. Therefore, Solomon then poured himself into his labor on earth. At the end of his life; however, he looked back at his work in despair.

He found that it was inadequate. No matter how hard he worked and no matter how much he succeeded, it did not bring fulfillment. Next, he discovered that it was impermanent. His work was only a short-lived vapor that would be left behind when death came. Finally, Solomon looked at his labor with despair because it was to be inherited. He had worked hard only to leave

behind his labors to someone who would likely waste it. That is exactly what happened to Solomon's labor. He left behind his great kingdom divided between Jeroboam and his son Rehoboam who squandered their opportunities. Solomon achieved so much through his labors only to find out that they led straight to another dead end.

Solomon's discoveries should be of great value to us today. He proved that none of these things are able to fulfill or satisfy the human soul. He also reveals to us that, not only can these individual things not satisfy, but all of these things combined will fail to satisfy as well. We have an opportunity to learn from Solomon's example and avoid the dead ends he experienced. We have an opportunity to learn from him that our life's purpose, fulfillment and satisfaction can only be found in a personal, ongoing relationship with Almighty God through Jesus Christ His Son.

Ivy is pastor of Fairfield Church, Moselle.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

"What Do You Think of the Gospel?"

Romans 1:1-5, 8-17

The gospel is meant for each of us. John 3:16 IS the gospel message: God loved the world — He gave His only Son — Everyone who believes, receives eternal life.

WHAT PAUL THOUGHT ABOUT THE GOSPEL (Romans 1:1-5) — Paul introduces himself at the beginning of his letter to the Roman church, calling himself a slave (actually, a bond servant to his master: Jesus Christ). He continued his self-description as an apostle (one sent on an authorized mission), and as being singled out and called to share the good news of salvation. (Rom. 1:1)

The Roman church was a strong Gentile church grounded on faith in Jesus Christ. In verses 2-5, Paul restates the definition of the gospel and the affirmation of Jesus Christ as

the powerful Son of God. He believed the gospel was the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believed in Christ as Savior and Lord. The Roman church knew these facts, but Paul mentioned them again and reminded them of his own calling and ministry.

From what we have learned through his New Testament letters, we can know his heart-thoughts about the Gospel. His life was a reflection of Jesus Christ.

We have many opportunities to explain the gospel and what it means to accept Christ as our Savior. Be assured, people around us can tell if we are just explaining the reason for the gospel, or if it is important to our lives.

On July 28, my husband, Charles, and I ate in one of



Davis

our favorite nice restaurants on the Gulf Coast. We were being escorted toward the dining room. Instead of asking the usual rote questions, she said, "Table for two, non-smoking!" I said, "Wow! How did you know?" She rattled off a list like she

had critiqued us as soon as we walked in the door: "You're holding hands, you're smiling, you look happy, you're dressed neatly, you smell nice... I can just tell." To me, that was a scary moment. We hadn't said one word, but she had formed an opinion of our lifestyles. Dear Lord, help us to be so aware of our influence that even what we wear, the way we smile, and how we smell is important to the people we meet. After all... as they form an opinion of us they are forming an opinion of the gospel of Jesus Christ, whom we represent.

PAUL WAS A WILLING WITNESS (Romans 1:8-15) — Paul used his letter to remind

the Roman church that he had thanked God for them. Their strong faith was being talked about in the other areas of the world (v.8). He assured them that his words were complimentary in discussions with other believers. Possibly, the Roman church was expecting him to come. In verse 10, he expressed his desire (according to God's will) that he would at last be able to see them.

His reason for a visit was two-fold: 1. that he might strengthen their faith, and 2. that he would be encouraged by them. Christian fellowship is a lasting form of friendship.

In the pastoral ministry, we have had occasions to revisit churches we previously served. It's a precious time. We are always pleased to see people serving in leadership roles that earlier, they were too shy to assume. They encourage us. We pray that our encouraging words will confirm their commitment in service. In Paul's words: "to be mutually encouraged by each other's faith" (v. 12 Holman's Christian Standard Bible).

Paul wanted to visit the Roman church, and minister to the Greek Gentiles (wise), and others he referred to as barbarians (foolish; uncircumcised). Like most preachers, he was eager to proclaim the good news!

PAUL WAS NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL (Romans 1:16-17) — Paul was not ashamed of the gospel, but he reminded the church of God's power of salvation to all people. If you follow Paul's life closely you will find that he never missed an opportunity to share the good news of the gospel. He boldly proclaimed Christ as his Savior and Lord.

We, too, will have many times when we are faced with the opportunity to share Jesus. Will we stand boldly for our Lord? Does our faith cause us to speak for Him?

Because of the gospel message, and our relationship with God, we will be righteous people who live by faith (v. 17). So, what do YOU think of the gospel?

Davis is a member of First Church, McComb.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.



Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing,

and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

Baptists brighten New York City with paint project

NEW YORK CITY (BP) — Some people may have thought Southern Baptists were biting off more of the Big Apple than they could chew with their Paint the Town project, but nearly 2,000 volunteers proved any skeptics wrong.

"Paint the Town is proving to be what I call the doorway to the soul of the city," said Gary Frost, director of missions for the Metro New York Baptist Association. "Southern Baptists are perceived by many in the Northeast to be fundamentalist Bible-thumpers. This project really allows us to be seen as who we are: compassionate people who love Christ and each other."

By the time school starts the first week of September, Southern Baptists in two months will have painted the interiors of nine schools in the Bronx, one in Harlem and two on Long Island. Less visible are the hundreds of New Yorkers' lives changed as a result of connecting on the subways and streets of the nation's largest city with SBC volunteers.

"Only on the other side of heaven will we see the lasting impact these volunteers are having on New York City," said Roy Mallory, volunteer Paint the Town project foreman. "I know directly there have been at least 200 who have professed Christ that we've heard about, and we haven't begun to get our data back."

The question — What are you doing here? — is an open invitation to share the Good News of God's love for all people, said Mallory, a member of the Atlanta-area First Church in Woodstock.

"We've actually had people ask, 'What have you people done to have to come out and paint in the schools?'" Mallory said. "They're even more astonished when we tell them we have paid our way to come and be here."

In addition to travel and lodging expenses, each Paint the Town volunteer gave \$100 to help offset the cost of paint and supplies, said Sandra Mallory, the project's volunteer coordinator.

"It's not a fee; it's a contribution," she said. "Every mission trip I've ever been on, I have spent money on supplies and materials.... We used that same philosophy and, with other donations, that's how we're able to paint as many schools as we are."

Benjamin Moore paint company donated 2,000 gallons of paint, which was enough to complete two schools, and made additional paint available at reduced cost.

Painting the schools — as daunting a task as that can be, when hallways sometimes are 125 feet long and ceilings in school gyms 30 feet high — is only a part of Paint the Town. The summer included six block parties and 25 sports camps, even a Twin Towers mural painted on the side of a building. And: Each school was "adopted" by a local church.

"Our goal is that if the school needs anything, the church will be their first call," Roy Mallory explained. "It will be a way the church can better serve its community, serving children and families in need."

Paint the Town is part of New Hope New York, a Strategic Focus Cities evangelism and church planting thrust sponsored by the North American Mission Board (NAMB), now in its second implementation year in NYC. The painting project's genesis was in the wistful dream of a Bronx middle school principal to have the 100-year-old building she was in painted last summer.

Though ordinarily a much smaller project would be a year or two in the planning, the Bronx painting project was completed in less than two months.

The 2004 effort involved more than 500 volunteers from at least 70 churches in 15 states.

"What can we do now?" painting project leaders then asked last September. Connections were made with the school superintendent of Region 1, "the most high risk region in the Bronx, the poorest, the most gangs," said church planter Steve Kelly, who facilitated the contacts with government officials.

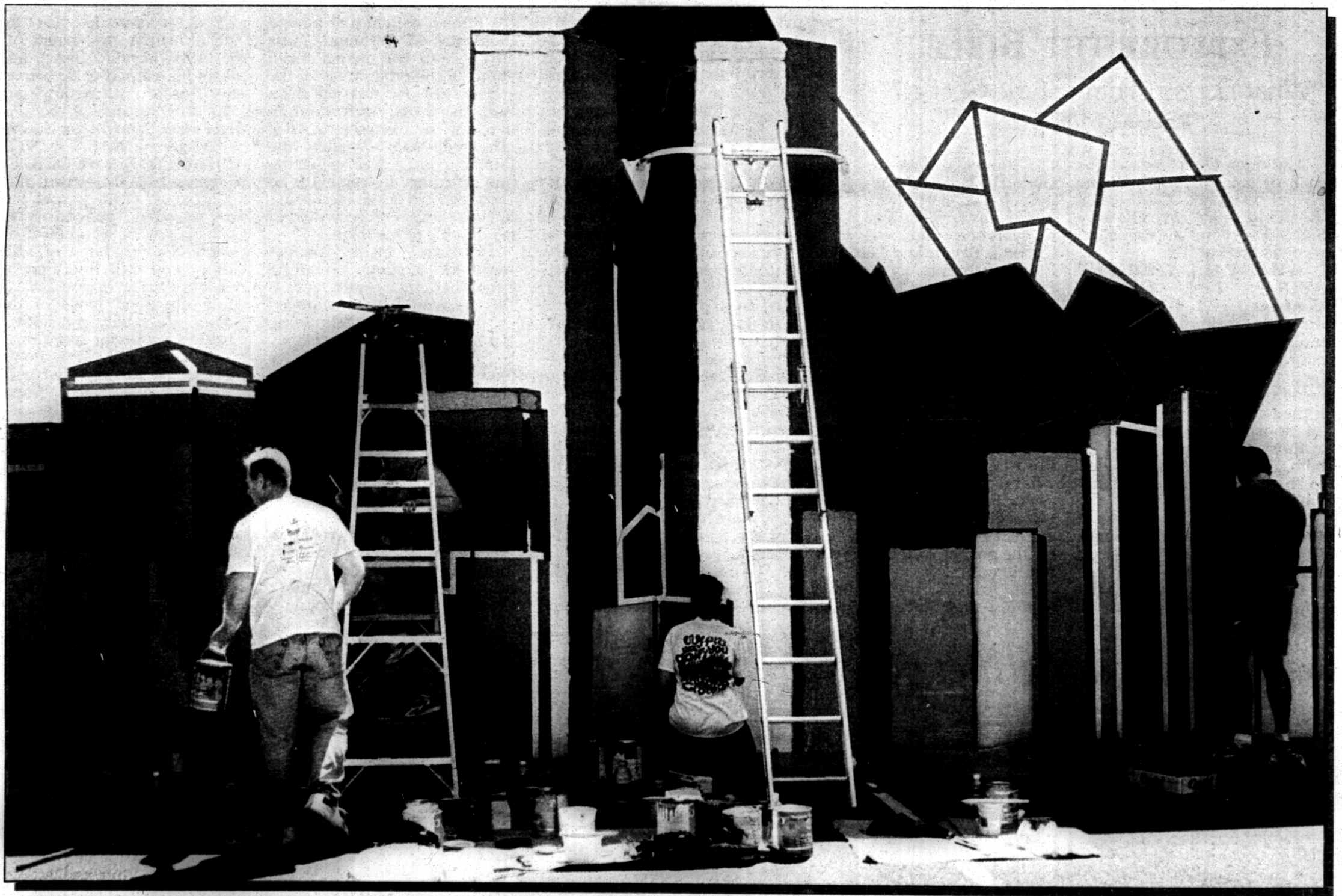
"We chose the schools in the worst condition, where we could make the biggest impact," Kelly said.

The painting jobs could not be started until July 5 and needed to be done by Aug. 29 to give the teachers a week before school started to get their rooms in order.

"Our [school] superintendent is impressed, so we're hoping Paint the Town will spread across New York City," Mallory said. "We go in to a school and say, 'What do you need?' We patch small holes, but we tell them we don't do restoration. We're here to paint."

That "we" includes people of all ages from across the country. "They come from everywhere," Sandra Mallory said. "They've seen the information on The Bridge, NAMB's construction volunteers project website. They understand how painting the schools and giving to the community with a service project like this can be used to till the soil and plant the seeds so we can share Christ with people."

By the end of August, the volunteers will have spent about a half-million man hours completely painting the inside of five schools in the Bronx — teachers' offices, cafeterias, halls, rooms, bathrooms — while four other Bronx schools will have freshly painted halls, classrooms, and bathrooms.



MURAL OF HOPE — Volunteers from Brentwood, Tn., paint a mural commemorating Sept. 11 on the handball court at MS 117 in the Bronx. School administrators approved an inquiry from a professional artist on the mission team to grace the wall with some artistry. (BP photo courtesy of New Hope New York)